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NOT IDEAL CONTENTMENT, BUT STERN COMMERCIALISM.

WONDERFUL things are still destined to come to this great section of ours—the New South. Already the old has given way to the new.

And it is best.

The old life was a beautiful, picturesque one, but it was not in tune with this modern, industrial world. It had its roots in the past, and the past cannot endure. We could not go on living in an ideal world, such as it was in ante-bellum days, for the real world will assert itself, and even if no war had come on to upset things, they would have been upset. Railroads and telegraphs have come to us rather in spite of ourselves than by reason of it. The old generation accepted these departures as a convenience yet maintained they were antagonistic to their views.

No one can live in the past and successfully fight off the present.

At the end of the Civil War a new labor system was established, and those of the old regime left learned to regard the men who worked for them, not as their dependents, for whom they were responsible, and for whose welfare they felt a responsibility, but as so many employees, to be dealt with through a trades union, and keep down to the lowest scale of wages consistent with their living and working. It was destined that the new should triumph over the old.

The slaves of the Old South were beyond question the best paid, the best fed, the best housed and altogether the best cared for laboring population in the world. They were secure in childhood and in old age and in illness, as no other laboring people on earth were. They were happy, and in important ways they were even freer than any other laboring class ever was. But they were slaves, and modern thought insisted that they would be better off as free men, even though freedom should bring to them a loss of happiness and a loss of that well nigh limitless liberty which they enjoyed as bondsmen, under care of kindly masters.

Modern thought is resistless and will have its way. All history teaches that. Even chivalry, armed as it was from head to heel, and limitlessly courageous as it was, could not hold its own against commercialism, when that new name for civilization became dominant as the thought that represented the aspirations of men. Not even prejudice or sentiment can prevail against progress.

The pollution of the air with the vomitings of unsightly factory chimneys has become a sight more spoken of in pride than the beautiful field of the past.

No man and no people can for long stand in the way of what the Germans call "zestgeist"—the spirit of the age. Neither can any people stand apart from that spirit and let it pass them by. That is what the Old South tried to do. But the time came when it went out to fight the zestgeist and the zestgeist conquered; the things of the past became a matter of history, the memory of which the novelists love to recall, but conditions that can never again be established.

God bless the old life!

We have begun worthily the new—the New South that shall become, not so much the garden spot, but the commercial power of a great nation—the greatest of all history, past or yet to be made.

LOST ARTS.

NOT as much as we used to, but occasionally even yet, one hears of some wonder accomplished by the ancients which cannot be done now.

Not so many years ago it was quite commonly asserted that modern workmen could not quarry, or, having quarried, could not handle stones as large as the monoliths of Egypt; and a writer in the Scientific American has heard a speaker of note assert that it would be impossible to handle, with modern implements, such large stones as were used in the pyramids, or to join them as perfectly as they are joined there; yet, when occasion arose, larger stones than any of these were quarried in Maine, and some of the larger monoliths themselves were transported, not only to the sea, but across it, and erected in England and France; and there are individuals today who might, if they chose, cause the transportation to and erection in this country of the largest pyramids, or build new ones ten times larger and more durable. Pyramids are not being generally built, nowadays, because they are not in line with the trend of modern ambition; that's all.

It is very doubtful if a "Damascus blade" would stand half as severe usage as a modern band-saw blade, or even as much as the spring of a forty-cent clock; while the ornamentation of those wondrous blades, so far as the mechanical execution is concerned, can be excelled by apprentices and amateurs of today.

Of the "lost art" of hardening copper little is heard of late years, though one occasionally hears a wiseling from the wilds wish he knew how to do it as well as the ancients; and, while it is perhaps regrettable that he doesn't his ignorance is his own fault.

Many arts and devices have been abandoned because new knowledge has made them useless, and time spent in rediscovering them would be worse than wasted. The modern youth had much better spend his time studying the art of his contemporaries than that which is "lost."

AVOIRDUPOIS.

WHEN the sheriff closed his fifty-fourth saloon the Honorable John L. Sullivan remarked: "Nobody loves a fat man anyway." Mr. Sullivan threw too much emphasis on what was only one among the causes of his declining popularity. The disappearance of comely outlines in his body weighed less with the fickle public than the loss of his ability to plant his fist upon a fellow-being's jaw with such momentum that the aforesaid man and brother would instantaneously cease to feel or think. Mere fat, however, has doubtless had its own appointed place in the decadence of John. Every woman would rather be fair than fat at forty, in spite of the famous statement of the Maiden Queen. But we would say a word for the really fat—not those who have external appearance of much flesh, from some unworthy cause, such as too much feasting, but for those whose souls are fat with cheerfulness and humor, like the soul of Falstaff. Even a poet might, in this nobler sense, properly be fat: and it was thus Caesar thought when he distrusted the lean and hungry Cassius. Caesar himself grew fat in Egypt, but it was from Cleopatra's cookery, not from deep and soothing peace. "Laugh and be fat" remains one of the rocks impregnable of human thought. "The liberal soul," saith the Hebrew proverb, "shall be made fat." Nature intended our cheeks to be convex.

When Secretary Seward paid $7,200,000 for what was generally considered the waste Arctic region of Alaska, and had great difficulty in justifying his action in thus "buying a pig in a poke," even farseeing Americans could have had no idea that in less than forty years the then lightly regarded bargain would be paying annual dividends of 300 per cent on the investment. This year Alaska and the Klondike will have a gold output of over $21,000,000, between three and four millions more than last year's product; and, as the New York Evening Mail, which prints the figures, points out, the Klondike region and all gold fields across the line in British territory are as much a part of the United States "for every purpose of finance or commerce" as if they had been included in the Seward purchase. And gold is only one source of Alaska's wealth, the territory having shown possibilities, even in the way of agriculture, undreamed of ten years ago. This vast and rich territory, with its great and growing permanent population of enterprising and pure-blooded Americans, has been treated in rather shabby fashion by the Washington government, which has turned a deaf ear to its appeals for recognition in the shape of a full-fledged territorial government. So resentful are many of Alaska's people that a mass meeting recently demanded secession from the United States and annexation to Canada. This, of course, was the action of extremists and intended merely for effect, but the next session of congress should not withhold a territorial government from a section of the country which is better fitted even for statehood than half the existing Territories and at least one State.

The fine old cadet mess building at West Point some years ago was given the name of Grant hall. The cadets from the North and from the South contributed a sum of money for the purchase of a portrait of te general, which was given a commanding place in the hall. Not long afterward the Northern cadets and a number of Northern army officers who were graduates of the academy bought a picture of General Robert E. Lee, one time superintendent of the school, and with full sanction of the authorities gave it a place on the walls of Grant hall. The grave of sectionalism was dug years ago at the United States military academy. The state of Virginia wishes to place a statue of its son, Robert E. Lee, in the Memorial hall of the national capitol. There is strong objection to the project, coming mostly from civilians of the Northern states. It would seem that objection might pass when soldiers have set the civilians so bright an example of the beauty of forgetting and forgiving.

A family tree doesn't always keep one on the shady side of the street.

A MILLION LOST DOLLARS.

THE minute sum of $2,000 is needed to keep the ram Katahdin in good condition, and the government is in doubt whether to throw two thousand good dollors after a million bad ones or to let the craft fall to pieces. The Katahdin dates from that period in the history of the new navy when we were aimlessly groping after short cuts to maritime power. We wanted a formidable fleet without paying its price. So we tried various schemes for getting paval strength cheap. The vesuvius was one of them—a contrivance for coughing up dynamite shells by hot air. She cost $350,000, and we were so well pleased with ourselves when we built her that we appropriated $450,000 more for an improved mate, but thought better of it and never spent the money. About the same time we made an appropriation for a "submerging monitor," designed by or for a member of congress who had influence with our naval committees, but that money, too, stayed in the treasury. Admiral Ammen was more successful as an inventor of freaks. He not only secured an appropriation for his ram, the Katahdin, but got the thing actually built, and it is solemnly carried on the navy list to this day. The Katahdin is a turtle-backed, pointed contrivance, built with girders running lengthwise to resist the shock of collision. She carries no battery except four six-pounder rapid-fire guns, and is supposed to be in herself a floating missile. As her best speed is a trifle over sixteen knots, while the ships she would be expected to ram can make from eighteen to twenty-three, the only way, according to Collier's Weekly, that she could accomplish her purpose would be to hide behind a tree and jump out when the enemy was looking the other way. The Vesuvius has been turned into a serviceable torpedo training ship, but the Katahdin is so utterly useless for any purpose whatever, naval or commercial, that the authorities grudge the cost of the paint it takes to keep her from rusting away.

There is an almost pathetic element in the present position of the Japanese envoys who are now in New York preparing to sail for home October 2. Baron Komura, stricken with typhoid fever in a foreign land and with the prospect of being mobbed upon his arrival in Japan, has indeed a dismal outlook. Of the two great peace plenipotentiaries—Witte and Komura—the latter is probably the more popular in the Tnited States. He has conducted his important mission with a reserve and dignity that at times was lacking in the deportment of the big Russian. Witte became hysterical at the conclusion of the long negotiations and boasted and blustered in a way that offended justice-loving Americans. His attitude towards his adversary was not that of a brave man for a courageous foe. But no one can accuse Baron Komura of having exhibited any "yellow streak" or of not being a "game" loser. A heavy responsibility was placed upon the shoulders of this little Japanese gentleman by his sovereign, but his country seems anything but grateful to him for his service. One of his associates said a few days ago that they expected to be greeted by a mob when they reached Japan and that their lives had been threatened. But Baron Komura insists from his sick bed that he will return on schedule time and make a report to the Japanese diet. Possibly by that time the feeling against him will have subsided so that a demonstration may be avoided. This is the hope of the American people, who have only respect and admiration for Baron Komura and his associates.

For the convenience of mail order houses the postoffice department has decreed that all rural mail boxes shall be numbered consecutively. This means that outside firms can now send all sorts of literature to the farmers, even if they don't know their names, without fear that the truck will be thrown into the postmaster's waste basket. The country press is kicking.

Governor La Follette, like Colonel Bryan, may not be reforming the country perceptibly, but, also like Colonel Bryan, he is making money by preaching reform. He has cleaned up $20,000 this season by the free use of his lungs.

Education, according to an eminent scientist, is "a transformation from an indefinite, incoherent homogenity to a definite, coherent hetrogenity by a series of differentiations." Many a young man has gone through college without discovering what had happened to him.

The statement that a Louisville policeman eats forty pounds of peanuts a week is astonishing. That is double the amount eaten by the average policeman.

A little learning is a very unsatisfactory thing.

A man is good just as long as he has to be, at least.

Absence makes the heartsore ponder.

A march should be soleful music.

TELEPHONE MANNERS.

SEVERAL New York writers are now engaged in an animated revival of the old discussion of telephone manners. In the Times one man protests against the all too common practice of sending an office boy or stenographer to call up someone and then, after the person wanted arrives, keep him waiting until the first person goes to the instrument. This, he declares is an impertinence that imposes on the time of one busy man at the convenience of another, and suggests that persons thus imposed on should make it a rule not to again answer such a call.

Taking up the discussion, the Brooklyn Eagle man remarks that retaliatory measures won't do, and points out that the same dislike of New Yorkers to make a fuss which has enabled the custom to become fixed stands in the way of uprooting it by any such hrrsh measures. While confessing that any question of good or bad manners can be more interestingly discussed in New York than anywhere else in this country, we venture to suggest another impertinence quite as annoying as the one complained of in the Times. It is the habit of some people of calling a number and then, instead of asking if this is Blank's meat market, blandly inquire who is talking. This puts the recipient of the call in the position of telling a perfect stranger who he is, to be met frequently with the impatient reply: "I don't want you at all. Ring off!"

The general American standard of politeness and good breeding is probably truthfully represented in our telephone manners. It is regrettable that the element of courtesy and consideration is too frequently absent from the average conversation over the wire. What is ruder or more exasperating than for a busy man to be called to the phone only to be greeted by the question, "Do you know who this is?" or "Don't you know my voice?" or other flippant salutation.

It is an odd fact that people use the telephone more often to ask favors than to confer them, yet they fail to take this into account. A person unconsciously lapses into discourteous mannerisms when using a telephone that would not be thought of for a second in a direct interview. If two persons are talking over a wire and a third is unintentionally connected and interrupts, how wild are the protests and how roseate are the admonitions to "get out of here!" and "don't butt in!" and "stay out of this, you lobster!" A similar interruption of a direct conversation on the street would not arouse half the warmth of expostulation.

Perhaps in the future years telephone manners will be the subject of serious concern on the part of philanthropists and sociologists. It may be that some way will be devised to enforce decent politeness and consideration by those who now impose boorish deportment upon their fellow beings. All of the better bred telephone users will unite in earnestly hoping for such a consummation.

The ancient Romans made the standard gauge of our present railways. The width of the wheel base as the most up-to-date dining car is what it is, because it was originally that of the chariots which rolled along the Roman roads in Britain. A recent speaker upon the subject at Newcastle has put the matter beyond theory. He said that many years ago he had known an old gentleman who, in his youth, had been associated with Stephenson. This old gentleman had told him that he had asked the great engineer why he had adopted the still existing gauge, and Stephenson had explained that he found it was the width between the ruts in the roads along the Roman wall, and that he thought that if a world power like Rome had found tqat gauge the most effective, he could not do better than adopt it also.

The Texas and Pacific adopted an odd regulation recently which was a means of showing the absurdity of freight quarantines. A certain town in Louisiana which had barred even hardware found itself running short of whisky and ice, and sent in an order. The Texas and Pacific refused to carry the consignment, asserting that whisky and ice carried just as many yellow fever germs as hardware, dry goods, groceries, carbolic acid, sulphur, lumber and drug supplies. It may be added that whisky and ice were duly delivered. The community saw the inconsistency of their position and at once opened up to all commodities which of course included the concomitants for mint juleps and long toddies.

A pretty idea for a country garden is that of the Shakespeare garden, every plant mentioned by the poet being cultivated. Lady Warwick has such a garden and Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney is said to be planning just such a garden on her American estate when she returns from abroad.

Competent statisticians declare that twenty-two acres of land are necessary to sustain one man on fresh meat. The same space of land, if devoted to wheat culture, would feed forty-two people; if to oats, eighty-eight; potatoes, Indian corn and rice, 176, and if to the plantain, or banana, over 6,000 people.